

V. REMARKS

Claims 12, 16 and 20-27 are objected to because of informalities. The claims are amended to obviate the objection. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 17 is rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph. Due to the amendments of claim 16 from which claim 17 depends, the rejection is now moot. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 12-19 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,764,091) in view of Mlyah (U.S. Patent No. 5,988,651). Claims 20-27 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Ikeda as applied to their respective parent claims and further in view of Murakami et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0019698). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Examiner asserts that in the office action, as follows:

"In particular, in Fig. 2, Mlyah teaches a gasket having a raised portion (A10) surrounding a sealed portion wherein the right end of the raised portion and a base surface (A10a) of the gasket are not set on a single plane, the raised portion includes a flat surface (A10) positioned at a height differing from the height of the base surface (A10a) and an inclined surface (A13) with a predetermined angle of inclination which links the flat surface (A10) with the base surface (A10a). As shown in Fig. 1, an outer edge of the flat surface does not have a shape similar to the shape of an inner edge."

However, Fig. 1 only shows that an outer edge of the gasket A has a rectangular shape, and the inner edge located around a cylinder bore has a circular shape. Thus, it does not teach that the outer edge of the flat surface of the gasket is similar to the inner edge thereof.

The gasket A of the prior art has, as shown in Fig. 2, the shape in a cross sectional view taken along a line 2-2 of Fig. 1. A raised portion surrounding a sealed

portion according to the present invention corresponds to a step surface A13 located in the right end side of Fig. 2 and a flat portion which continues to the right side of the step portion in the prior art. The step portion (A13) corresponds to the inclined surface 41, and the step portion (A13) which continues to the right side of the flat surface corresponds to the flat surface 40 of the present invention.

The flat surface which continues to the step portion (A13) in right side in Fig. 2 has, as seen in Fig. 1, a circle shape formed around a liquid opening Hw. As far as understood from Fig. 1, the outer edge and inner edge thereof has a circular shape and are similar to each other.

Therefore, the prior art fails to teach that "the outer edge of the flat surface is not similar to the inner edge thereof."

Moreover, the Examiner states, in the office action, that "Miyaoh teaches that the inner edge (right edge, in Fig. 2) of the flat surface is squared off, and thus not circular. However, Fig. 2 shows a cross sectional view taken along the line 2-2 of Fig. 1, as mentioned above, and it can be understood from Fig. 1, that the inner edge of the flat surface has the circular shape which is the same as that of the circumference of the liquid opening Hw.

Therefore, the Examiner's understanding that "the outer edge of the fat surface is not similar to the inner edge thereof is not correct, and thus Miyaoh fails to teach the features of the present invention.

It is respectfully submitted that that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claimed invention as discussed above. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are allowable over the applied art.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

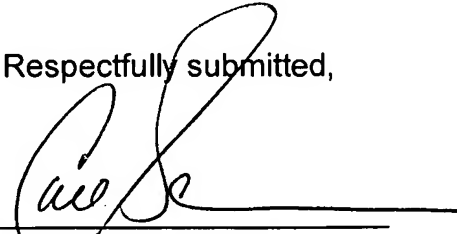
It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this Amendment is believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to set forth further arguments and remarks supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


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